1: Messing E-5 (1953-1954)1957 MP5 Amhara MP5

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- 2 "alad", Menelik half-thaler, no longer used.
- 4 "rub", quarter MT Thalers, no longer in use, but still occasionally quoted.

The term "gresh" is still used in its probable derivative, the well-known "gursha", meaning tip given to a servant, etc., apparently replacing an earlier term. Also, it is interesting that Gresham's Law functions also in Ethiopia: The new coinage, once accepted (rather than fear of prosecution) drove the old MT Thaler out of circulation. Furthermore, from time to time certain items of the new coinage become particularly popular for some temporary reason, and then are hoarded and absent from circulation.

471 In traditional Amhara material culture there is an absence of such processing industries, (except for specializations mentioned), as soap factories, flour mills, brick factories, textile factories, timber mills, sugar industries, power industries (no windmills), though the essentials for such industries exist. Foreigners have, in recent decades, built a few small ones at major centers of population, since Menelik and the present Emperor began handing out concessions. There are economic and national reasons, e.g. the law that foreigners may only rent but not buy real estate. The present government of Ethiopia has a monopoly on and produces matches and cigarettes. Whether private or public, processing industries can be expected to increase gradually and bring about

1: Messing E-5 (1953-1954)1957 MP5 Amhara MP5

632 Since the town attracted the most clever "däbtära",
[784] many of whom were herbologists, it was also a center where "medical aid", sometimes quite effective, could be obtained, and attracted patients from far and wide.

[463] Ethnic craftsmen would settle in hamlets within walking distance of the town, to provide iron tools, tanned leather, sun umbrellas, etc., without, however, exposing themselves to mockery, insults and occasional assaults by living in the town itself.

632 517 The town developed as a social center, and center for entertainment, almost inevitably. First, religious feasts such as the Epiphany parades and the tournaments on the public commons on "ganna" (Christmas) attracted the populace; and youngsters as well as adult loafers found themarket scenes fascinating. Secondly, the Arab traders liked to discuss business and news over tea or coffee. So "teahouses " (shay bet") sprang up near the [265] Saturday market, serving snacks also to many a male at odds with his wife, and excluding all womenfolk. Con- 632 548 588 versely, the mead house, ("tej bet") provided evening entertainment with female singers and dancers (gzmari) for the all-male clientele, and waitressos easil, available for sexual entertainment. Moreover, every town had at least one "street of unattached women", who catered to travellers or visiting peasants as innkeepers, restaurateurs, and as temporary wives; they were usually divorcees, who hoped to find another husband, and to settle down again to regular married life.

632 178 Except for some of the feudal arrangements, most of this town pattern of social organization is still

631 635 178 It is noteworthy that in this structure the Governor-general of the province is the only administrator permitted to appoint the next two highest officers of his own staff (since 1942). This is in line with the consistent development since 1916, when the present emperor, then regent, began the process of sweeping away the power of the top of the feudal-provincial pyramid. The "ras" gradually lost their private armies, and were expressly forbidden, by decree in 1942, to make treaties between provinces regarding boundaries or political or military matters.

[648] Contact with foreigners was also taken out of the exclusive jurisdiction of the Governor-general of the province, since foreigners going to the provinces require permits issued by the Ministry of Interior in Addis Ababa; these permits have to presented to the provincial administrators before local travel is allowed . Even the control over the "Kantiba", the mayors of the major towns, was taken from the Governor-general of the province, and invested, by decree of 1942, in the "Director of Municipalities" in the Ministry of Interior. This central control over municipalities was evident in 1953, when mayors were called to Addis Ababa by the Director of Municipalities, for a reprimand from the emperor for having permitted his boarding establishments at elementary schools, intended for war orphans, to become filled with the sons of well-to-do feudal nobility.

631 565 The feudal nobility, though much less powerful than in the past, plays a more informal, but still

2: Allen G-5 (1941) 1943 MP5 Amhara MP5

133 could see the forests blazing on the flanks of Belaia from the bombs dropped by the Savoias in their unsuccessful attempts to search out the Emperor's camp.

The wooded flanks of the Western Escarpment of the Ethiopian plateau overlook the plains of the Sudan. The top of the Escarpment is 4000–5000 feet above sea-level, and the gap opposite Mambuk village which we climbed is about 2000 feet above the level of the Shankalla plain, which rises steadily in a series of low rocky corrugations all the way from the Dinder river some 100 miles to the west. From the top of the Escarpment the fertile plains of Gojjam stretch for another 100 miles to the canyon of the Blue Nile. There is a fall of about 5000 feet to the great ravine with its subtropical vegetation from the dusty upland round Debra Markos. From the western edge of the Blue Nile Scarp it is a whole day's march down to the river for loaded animals, and more than a day's march up the eastern bank on to the Salale plateau at Shafartak.

The Ethiopian Highland is a series of plateaux separated by deep canyons such as that of the Blue Nile. The eastern edge of the Highland is the western edge of the great African rift. There is a parallel rift from lake Tana along the canyon of the Blue Nile to the Southern Lakes of Ethiopia and it is continued through the East African lake system down to lake Tanganyika. A series of north–south and east–west faults divide up the Ethiopian highland into separated plateaux. The Awash valley, running west–east, and really connecting the north–south rifting with the Red Sea basin, flows in the most notable of these. The different plateaux are sometimes connected by narrow necks of land or panhandles: for instance the neck connecting the plateau of Debra Zebit with that of Debra Tabor is hardly more than 100 yards across with a sheer drop south-west to the ravine of the Bashilo and north to that of the Gash or Takkaze.

133 177 648 These peculiar geographical conditions explain much in Ethiopian history. The great line of the Escarpment, overlooking the Red Sea depression on the east and the Sudan plains to the west, has protected the population of the uplands from penetration by foreign armies until modern times. The only successful conquest of Ethiopia was that of Muhammad Gran, the "left-handed," a Somali chieftain who is reputed to have had an Ethiopian father. The Somali-Arab armies which were really the spearhead of Turkish imperialism on the Red Sea in the great days of the Ottoman Empire in the sixteenth century, penetrated the Ethiopian Highland by the Awash valley in a series of campaigns which lasted for about half a century. In the end the great altitudes and the inclement rainy seasons probably restored their independence to the Ethiopians. In general, it may be said that the Highlanders have never been able to conquer and hold the hot lowlands of the Red Sea and the Arabs and Somalis have never been able to maintain themselves on the upland plateau. Only in the subtropical region of the southern lakes as far as the Dadessa valley and Jimma has there been any important penetration of Islamic influences.

133 177 Foreign influences, Semitic and that peculiar early Ethiopian or Eritrean civilization known as Aksumite, have come in from the north over the easier

4: Alvarez M-5 (1520-1526) 1881
MP5 Amhara MP5

CAP. XVIII.—*How we arrived at the town of Barua, and how the Ambassador went in search of the Barnagais, and of the manner of his state.* 648 ●

We reached the town of Barua,[1] which will be three leagues from the village of Zalote, on the 28th day of June. This town is the chief place of the country and kingdom of the Barnagais, in which are his principal palaces, which they call Beteneguz,[2] which means house of the king. On this day that we arrived here the Barnagais departed hence, before our arrival, to another town, the chief place of another district, which is named Barra, and the town is called Çeruel. It seemed to us that his departure was in order not to have to receive us, and some told us that he had gone away with pain in his eyes. We were very well lodged for this country, in good large houses of one story, terraced above. On the third day of our arrival, Don Rodrigo the ambassador determined on going to see the Barnagais; and we went with him, five of us on mules, and reached the place where he was staying at vespers. The distance to this place from that at which we were halting might be three and a half or four leagues, and we went to dismount before his palace, close to the door of a church, where we offered our prayers. Then we went our way to the palace, or Beteneguz, as they call it, thinking that we should at once speak to him; and they did not allow us to enter, saying that he was sleeping. And although we waited a good bit we had no means of speaking to him. We went to rest in a goat shed, in which we barely found room; and they gave us two ox-hides with the hair on to sleep upon, and for supper bread, and wine of the country in abundance, and a sheep. On the following day we waited a long time for them to call us, and a message came for us to come. Then in the outer gate we found three men like porters,

[1] *Dibarua*, hillock seen from afar. [2] *Bait en-neyus.*

4: Alvarez M-5 (1520-1526) 1881
MP5 Ambara MP5

648 each one with his whip[1] in his hand, and they would not let us enter, saying that we should give them some pepper, and they kept us for a good while at the gate. Passing through this gate we arrived at another, at which stood three other porters who seemed more honourable persons; these made us wait more than half an hour standing on a little straw, and the heat was so great it killed us. Upon this the ambassador sent to say that he should bid us come in or he would return to his abode. Then the message went by one who seemed to be of higher position, and word came that we should enter. The Barnagais was in this manner, in a [342] large house of one story (for in this country there are not [352] houses of several stories), sitting on a bedstead, as is their custom, fitted with poor curtains; he had sore eyes, and his wife was sitting at the head of the bedstead. Having made our obeisance, the ambassador offered him a *master* to cure him; and he said that he had no need of him, as though he did not thank him for it. Upon this the ambassador asked him as a favour, and required on the part of Prester John, that he should order equipment to be given us for our journey, assuring him how much service he would be doing in this way to the king of Portugal, which would be well repaid to him by the King and by his Captain-major; and he, the ambassador, would tell Prester John the honour and favour which he received from him. The Barnagais asking what it was that we required, the ambassador said he wanted oxen and asses for baggage, and mules for the Portuguese. To this the Barnagais replied that he could not give any mules, and that we might buy them ourselves; that he would give orders for the rest, and would send a son of his with us to the court of Prester John, and with that he gave us our dismissal.

[1] *Azorague*, a kurbach, or whip of hide, *cravache*.

4: Alvarez M-5 (1520-1526) 1881
MP5 Amhara MP5

CAP. XIX.—*How they gave us to eat in the house of the Barnagais, and how in this country the journeys are not reckoned by leagues.* 648

When we were out of the house where the Barnagais was, they made us sit down in the receiving room of another house on mats on the ground, and they brought here a large trencher of barley meal, but little kneaded, and a horn of mead. And, since we had not seen such food, we would not eat it; but when we were more accustomed to the country we ate it readily. Without eating of this, we arose and came to our resting-place and then set out. This might be at two hours before midday. Having gone on our road half a league or more there came to us a man running and telling us to wait; that the mother of the Barnagais was sending us food, and took it as a misfortune our coming away without eating and not accepting the food they gave us, which was that customary in the country. We waited, and the food came to us, that is to say, five large rolls of wheat bread and a horn of mead. Let not anyone be amazed who hears of a horn of wine, because for the great lords and Prester John cows' horns are their cups for wine, and there are horns holding five or six canadas.[1] Besides this, the mother of the Barnagais sent us some of the same kneaded flour, and now we ate some of it. This meal is of parched barley, made into flour, and they mix it up with very little water, and so eat it. After this banquet we made our way to the town of Barua, where our goods and companions had remained. In this country, and in all the kingdoms of Prester John, there are no leagues, and if you ask how far it is from this place to such a place, they say: If you depart in the morning at sunrise, you will arrive when the sun is in such a place; and if you travel slowly you will arrive there when they shut up the cows, that is at

[264] [262] [415] [262] 804

[1] A Portuguese measure equal to about three pints.

4: Alvarez M-5 (1520-1526) 1881
MP5 Amhara MP5

CAP. XXVII.—*How we departed from Barua, and of the bad equipment we had until we arrived at Barra.*

● 648 We were at Barua the first time, without their giving us equipment for our departure, for eleven days; we departed on the 28th day of June 1520, joyful and contented, because we were travelling on our way; and those that conducted us went with our baggage a distance of half a league, saying that their bounds went no further, and that another town had to take us further on. As I said, it was in June, in the force of the winter of this country, and they set us down, and our goods, in a plain, and very heavy rain. The ambassador and three of us went on the road to Barra to speak to the Barnagais, the factor and clerk and the other Portuguese remaining with our goods. As soon as we arrived we went to the palace of the Barnagais to tell him what his vassals were doing to us. They did not give us an opportunity to speak to him that day. On the following day we did not sleep in the morning, and went to speak to him: as soon as we spoke to him he told us he would at once send for the goods. He ordered it to be brought a distance of a league and a half, in which it passed through three districts, by reason of the great population which is in that country, and they came and placed the baggage in another plain, where they let it remain four days in the rain and storms. In these days the ambassador and those that were with him were not quiet: at one time we went to the baggage, which was a league and a half off from us, at other times at our resting place, at others in the house of the Barnagais, to require him to send for these goods which belonged to the King, and were going to Prester John, or to tell us that he did not choose, and we would have it set on fire, and go our way disembarrassed. His speech was always fair, but the fruits of it never came. When four days were completed he sent for the goods.

4: Alvarez M-5 (1520-1526) 1881
MP5 Amhara MP5

CAP. XXVIII.—*How the goods arrived at the town of Barra, and of the bad equipment of the Barnagais.*

On the 3rd day of July of the said year, '20, our baggage 648 ● arrived at the town of Barra, where we were. We hoped to start at once, and went to speak to the Barnagais requiring him to despatch us. We met with good words from him. On the following day a gentleman from the court of Prester John arrived, and the Barnagais gave him such a reception that he forgot us. When this gentleman arrived the Barnagais went out of the town to receive him at a small hill near the houses; and there went out with him many people, and he was naked from the waist upwards. The gentleman placed himself on the highest spot above the rest, and his first words were: the King sends to salute you. At these words all went with their hand upon the ground, [576] which is the courtesy and reverence of this country. After that, he spoke the message which he had brought, and when he had finished hearing it the Barnagais clothed himself with rich garments, and took the gentleman to his house. It is the usage of this country to hear the words which the [203] Prester sends outside the house, and on foot, and he to whom they are sent has to be naked above the waist until they have been delivered, and if the message is one of satisfaction on the part of Prester John, as soon as it is given he at once dresses himself: if it expresses his dissatisfaction, he remains naked as when he heard it. This Barnagais is brother of the mother of Prester John. After this the ambassador, and we with him, came to speak to the Barnagais, and he sent us away saying that for the love of God we should leave him, that he was sick. When we came they did not allow us to enter, saying that he was sleeping. So much passed of this sort that the ambassador said that he ill remembered what he had sworn and promised to the Captain-major of the King of Portugal, that is to say,

4: Alvarez M-5 (1520-1526) 1881
MP5 Amhara MP5

648 to assist us and order equipment to be given us for our journey, that he forgot all this, and also that he was not mindful of the friendship which they had established and sworn, since he did so little for the affairs of the King of Portugal. Neither on this account did he make any more haste, but always excused himself with his guest, and with being ill. On the 6th of July seven or eight horsemen arrived, very gaily caparisoned, these were Moors, and seemed to be honourable persons, they came from other countries, and brought many very beautiful horses, which they were bringing to pay as tribute which they owed to Prester John and the Barnagais. As the arrival of the Moors redounded to his profit, neither his guests nor his sickness impeded him. The great reception and honour which the Barnagais paid to these Moors gave us great trouble. The ambassador had told him that he wanted 648 661 twelve mules, and asked him to order them to be lent: he said that he could not lend them, and that we should buy them. When we wished to buy these mules which the people of the country were selling to us, the servants of the Barnagais came and interrupted the purchase, telling the vendors not to sell them, and that if they sold them they would be punished, and the gold would be taken away from them, for in this country money is not current. This happened in such manner that the rumour of it spread throughout the country, and the people told us that even if they wished to sell to us they did not dare, from fear of the Barnagais, because he wished to sell his own mules, and therefore forbade their selling them. (He has another method with 436 the people of his country.) In all the kingdoms of Prester John money is not current, but only gold by weight, and the principal weight is called *ouquia*,[1] and this, which is an ounce, makes in weight ten cruzados, and for change there is a half ouquia, and from twelve drachms to ten make

[1] A gold coin in some parts of Africa.

8: Rey G-5 (1910-1920)1935
MP5 Amhara MP5

age-long enemies and should allow them to profess their faith openly as they do, when one considers the havoc wrought by Moslem invasions and Galla inroads.

Even the Falasha Jewish ironworkers in the north, who are doubly regarded with dislike and suspicion as being Jews and as being possessed of supernatural powers, are treated with tolerance, though avoided.

No doubt this happy result is contributed to so far as Moslems are concerned by the fact that in Abyssinia they do not appear to be strict or fanatical—in pleasing contrast to their behaviour elsewhere. Mr Wyman Bury tells a delightful story in exemplification of this latter frame of mind. A pilgrim to Mecca, a plump and prosperous Moslem merchant at Aden in ordinary life, was gazing from the deck of the ship in rapt enthusiasm at Jeddah, which against the sun-scorched country beyond looked like a stale bridecake on a dust-heap. "Oh, the sacred land," he crooned "the blessed land, where pigs and Christians cannot live."

The Abyssinians still have a church in Rome, a monastery in Jerusalem, and monasteries and Ethiopic texts were discovered in the Libyan desert by the German explorer Falls.

The Abyssinian Church endeavours to maintain friendly relations with the other Christian communities: interesting examples of this are the missions sent to the Pope by the Emperor Menelik in 1906 and by the late Empress in 1921. A mission was also in Jerusalem at the close of 1922 in connection with some ancient rights of the Abyssinian Church regarding the Church of the Holy Sepulchre and other holy places; under the Turkish régime these rights had been transferred to the

8: Rey G-5 (1910-1920)1935
MP5 Amhara MP5

Coptic community. The present Emperor himself visited Jerusalem recently.

Possibly owing to ignorance and lack of education, the Church does not make any missionary efforts of its own amongst its subject races of Moslems and pagans, and up to recent years it did not tolerate, or at all events welcome, such efforts on the part of others. This is perhaps hardly surprising, for much of the missionary enterprise known to the Abyssinians had mingled politics with religious efforts, and had interfered in matters which had better have been left alone.

The Jesuits were expelled in 1633, and some who would not go were killed. The Protestant missionaries were expelled in 1838. Theodore can hardly have been said to have welcomed missionaries, though so far from expelling them he chained them up and would not let them go. King John expelled them again in 1886, and Menelik barely tolerated them, although a French mission has been established continuously in Tigré for a good many years.

But quite recently more missionaries have been allowed to start operations, especially in the Galla districts, and the Americans are particularly to the fore in this work in Addis Ababa and elsewhere. In addition, there is a French mission at Harrar and a convent at Addis Ababa, mainly educational and non-proselytizing, and a Swedish mission at the latter town of a similar character.

So far I do not think there is much trace of success by any of these institutions, but on the other hand there is evidence to shew (and my impressions are confirmed by American, Swedish, and French writers) that Islam, as in other parts of Africa, is making progress among

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[For historical information on the region of Manz in Shoa Province, along with its succession of leaders, its warfare with the Galla, and internal strife, see category 175.]

11:Levine Z-4,5 (1958-1961)1965 MP5 Amhara MP5 • Ethiopia MP1

the continuous Amharization of the peoples of the empire through the required use of Amharic in schools and government offices and through the substitution of Amharic names for indigenous place-names in many parts of the country. If the national institutions and culture of Ethiopia are essentially Abyssinian, more particularly they are Amhara.[2]

The domination of Ethiopian national life by the Amhara, and the related fact that the modern Ethiopian nation was the creation of the Amhara and not of European colonists, are characteristics which distinguish Ethiopia from all other African societies. For Ethiopia is the only country in Africa with a large number of ethnic groups where one of these groups has imposed its rule and its language over the rest and has preserved indigenous national institutions, elites, and culture patterns from displacement by Western forms and authorities.

This condition has imparted a basically conservative tone to the character of public life in Ethiopia, especially when compared to the new nations of sub-Saharan Africa. Because Ethiopians did not have to participate in the postwar struggle for independence, they did not experience the rise of agitational politics or the related phenomenon of political parties or movements. As a corollary of this, the Ethiopian populace was not exposed to oratory promising dynamic social and economic changes, and therefore developed no mass base of support for populist leaders who might seek to promote more rapid forms of change.

Yet if modernization has proceeded more slowly in Ethiopia than elsewhere in Africa—and speed in such matters has at times been associated with recklessness—the pattern of virtually unbroken Amhara rule for at least seven centuries stands in refreshing contrast to the somewhat anguished struggle for nationality within the new nations. Elsewhere in sub-Saharan Africa no indigenous cultural tradition exists at the national level. There are many degrees to this cultural fragmentation. At one extreme are countries such as the Ivory Coast which, with some sixty disparate tribal groups in a population of about three million, can as yet appeal only to French culture as a basis for unity at the national level. Somewhat less fragmented are the nations, like Nigeria, in which a small number of important tribal traditions dominate the national scene. Still more consolidated is Uganda, whose kingdom of Buganda has long supported a strong quasi-national tradition, but whose non-Baganda tribes have remained largely outside the pale.

In Ethiopia, by contrast, Amhara rule has long provided a minimal basis for national unity. While this rule has been secured by coercive means, it has accustomed the various tribes in Ethiopia to live under a common sovereignty and to some extent has enabled their leaders to communicate with one another by means of a common native tongue.

One need not be blind to the drawbacks of Amhara dominance to recog-

11:Levine Z-4,5 (1958-1961)1965 MP5 Amhara MP5
Ethiopia MP1

E 175 563 A 175 648

nize in it these and other important advantages for Ethiopia. These drawbacks have been those of any imperialism. During the great Amhara expansion under Menelik (1889–1913), many peoples were maltreated. Independent tribesmen were reduced to slavery; unique cultures were decimated; proud kings were dragged in the dust. Those who held down the Amhara position in these occupied territories seized land from the indigenous peoples and exploited them much as would any invader. The unfavorable reputation of the Amhara in the non-Amhara provinces has been due largely to the example of these governors and soldiers whose worst impulses were at times allowed free play.

One can scarcely single out the Amhara for criticism because of their imperialistic behavior in the past. Nor is it fair to judge the Amhara people as a whole by the character of their provincial officials in conquered areas, any more than one may judge the British, French, Portuguese, or Russian people by the behavior of certain imperious and sadistic colonial administrators. This distinction was self-evident to more discriminating observers of the Ethiopian scene like Augustus Wylde, who wrote in 1901:

A [565] [701] [159]

> There is no harder worker than the Abyssinian peasant, and no more harmless and hospitable person when left alone and properly treated; and no more truculent, worthless, conceited, lazy and useless individual than the Abyssinian soldier, who formerly did nothing but prey upon the defenceless cultivator.[3]

Indeed, if any imperialism of modern times should be granted special consideration, it might be that of the Amhara. The Amhara were to some extent merely reconquering lands that had been taken from them in earlier centuries. Furthermore, they needed additional strength to help withstand threats to their own independence. Finally, it can also be argued that if the Amhara had not conquered the other peoples now within the Ethiopian boundaries some European power might have colonized them instead.

E 563 A 648

However one may assess the fact of Amhara dominance in Ethiopia, it is a given of the present situation. It is a fact that leads naturally to two outstanding questions. One concerns the relations between the Amhara and the non-Amhara peoples of the empire: is it possible for the latter to be integrated more effectively and justly into the texture of a common national life? If not, the present state of tribal calm may prove to be but a long prelude to a wasteful storm. The question demands serious and sustained inquiry by a number of scholars, Ethiopians and foreigners alike.

E 563 178 121 A 121

The other question concerns the nature of Amhara culture, as the dominant tradition in Ethiopia, and its implications for the processes of Ethiopia's modernization now at work and yet to come. To this question we now direct our attention.

11:Levine Z-4,5 (1958-1961)1965 MP5 Amhara MP5

times brought dissension to the state, the legitimate Crown was triumphant most of the time.

In the history of Ethiopian literature the period has been called a Golden Age.[1] The important works composed during this time include *The Glory of Kings*, which contains the story of the Queen of Sheba, Solomon, and their offspring, Menelik I, legendary first king of Ethiopia; *The Book of the Mysteries of Heaven and Earth*, a compilation of occult theology and numerology, with a Miltonic account of the struggle between Michael and Satan; *The Christian Romance of Alexander the Great*, a fantastic portrayal of Alexander as a Christian hero who traverses the Land of Darkness and the miraculous Land of the Living; the moralizing tracts of the greatest emperor of the period, Zar'a Yā'qob; as well as numerous lives of saints and translations of Christian writings from Arabic.

Connoisseurs of Ethiopian art attribute the most original and refined paintings to the latter part of this period. Using translucent colors and austere shapes and design, Ethiopian monks brought to expression an intense spirituality in the form of miniatures in illuminated manuscripts.[2]

At the same time this was the Heroic Age of Ethiopian warfare. Amda Ṣeyon vanquished sixteen Muslim chiefs to the south and west; the valor of Sayfa Ar'ed was celebrated in medieval Arab tales of chivalry; Dāwit I pushed his victories against the Muslims as far as Zeila on the Gulf of Aden. Improved military equipment and organization under Yeshāq brought the imperial forces to a new level of discipline and power, which Yeshāq used to establish his authority in many southern areas. Zar'a Yā'qob, famous for endowing churches and monasteries and for encouraging literature and art, was a successful warrior in his own right.

A close-up of Ethiopia at the height of its medieval synthesis is provided by Father Francisco Alvares, Portuguese emissary to Abyssinia during the years 1520–27.[3] We see a prosperous kingdom, its far-flung dominions headed by hereditary rulers and royal appointees, all of whom pay tribute in kind to the emperor. The tribute consists of horses and mules, blankets and cloths, silk stuffs and gold, all in impressive amounts. The provincial heads, and the armies they must make available, live off the land they govern. The numerous priests and monks are supported by lands granted them by the king. Justice is administered at three levels, with the possibility of appeal from the local judge, to the provincial governor, to the royal court itself. The king's mobile camp, large as a town, is his capital, so that he spends his years marching about from one corner of his domain to another.

The monarch at the time of Alvares' visit was Lebna Dengel (1508–40), a man of pride and temper. He refused to heed counsel that the kingdom was imperiled by threats from the outside. Indeed, legend has it that he was discontented with the prevailing civil harmony and begged God to send an ad-

11:Levine Z-4,5 (1958-1961)1965 MP5 Amhara MP5

*175 643 versary, so that his people might be roused from their peacetime habits and the nation could have a chance to prove its might. Ethiopia never fully recovered from the shock that came in the middle of his reign.

*175 • 648 *Shock*

Amhara-Tigre society was convulsed by one disaster after another during the succeeding century. In 1527 began a series of conflicts with the Muslim kingdom of Adal led by a fearful warrior, Imam Ahmad ibn Ibrahim al-Ghazi, surnamed Grāñ. Equipped with firearms from the Ottoman Turks and hordes of Somali soldiers, Ahmad Grāñ proceeded to overrun Ethiopia, causing destruction and massacre wherever he tread. Only after most of the country had been laid waste, its inhabitants forced to embrace Islam, its churches looted and burned, was Ahmad Grāñ at last killed. His troops were routed by an Ethiopian force that had been revived by the expedition of Portuguese match-lockmen under Christopher da Gama.

The wars with Ahmad Grāñ left the country impoverished and disorganized. In this state it lay vulnerable to another shock: the massive tribal movements of the Galla from the south. The Galla advanced through periodic invasions of their warrior age groups. Coming first in furtive raids, then concerted warfare, finally by slow migration, these hardy nomads managed to penetrate deeply into Amhara lands. By 1563 the Galla had invaded over a third of the empire.

Ethiopia was further shaken in 1557 when the Ottoman Turks occupied the port of Massawa. This action introduced a problem that was to harass Ethiopia intermittently until the present: the danger of occupation by European powers. The Ethiopians were able to repulse the Turkish invader as he pushed farther inland, but Massawa remained in foreign hands until 1941.

*175 648 799 643 In seeking to recover from the destruction wrought by Grāñ's holy war, a number of emperors turned to European Christian powers for religious support as well as for political and technical assistance. Some of them became converts to Catholicism and, encouraged by Portuguese Jesuit missionaries, attempted to promote the new faith among their subjects. The outcome was only further bloodshed. Emperor Za Dengel's conversion in 1603 aroused civil strife and led to his downfall at the hands of nobles who did not share his Catholic sympathies. More serious trouble appeared during the reign of Susneyos (1607–32). He, too, adopted the Roman faith, and allowed one of the more impetuous Jesuits, Alphonzo Mendez, to direct a number of reforms in the Ethiopian Church. Mendez insisted that all priests be reordained by himself, that the population be rebaptized, and that the liturgy be rewritten. He forbade circumcision, and defined the previously unknown crime of witchcraft. Such measures antagonized the populace and provoked "horrid uproars, bloody wars, and the slaughter of many great Personages," as Lu-

11:Levine Z-4,5 (1958-1961)1965 MP5 Amhara MP5

dolphus put it.[4] At length, unable to witness the further decimation of his people because of religious controversies, Susneyos abdicated in favor of his son Fāsil. Fāsil lost little time in deporting the Jesuits and restoring the Orthodox status quo.

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Recovery

In the wake of all these collisions, Ethiopia made two valiant attempts to regain equilibrium and glory: through the splendor of Gondar in the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, and through the force of three emperors of the nineteenth century—Tēwodros II, Yohānnes IV of Tigre, and Menelik II of Shoa.

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Gondar was founded as a new and stationary capital by Fāsil. It served as imperial headquarters for many generations. Later, the kingdom of Tigre knew a resurgence of power that led to control of the empire under Yohānnes (1872–89). His castle at Makalle symbolized one last rally for the north—after an interregnum of a thousand years—before being eclipsed by the Shoan throne.

The shock which began with the invasions of Ahmad Grañ shattered Ethiopia's medieval synthesis once and for all. The political consequence of those disruptions was an increase in provincialism, reaching its climax in the famous "Age of the Princes" (1755–1855) when each province had its own sovereign and for all practical purposes was a polity unto itself. The Solomonic line, the matrix of Ethiopian political unity, was splintered in several directions, leaving contenders in each of the provinces. Though the official imperial line remained at Gondar, Tigre was able to reassert its ancient claims and Gojjam recurrently voiced its separatism, and what may be called the "House of Manz" came to compete with Gondar as a center of national consciousness.

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This political division was accompanied by a peculiar cultural bifurcation. Elements of the national culture that had been rather evenly distributed before Ahmad Grāñ now became relatively specialized in Gondar and Manz. The recovery of Ethiopia produced a geographical division of manners and morals as well as several lines of Solomonic royalty.

175* 184

HISTORICAL PROFILES

The Role of Gondar

Gondar is the only city in Ethiopia with charm and character expressive of Amhara culture. Even today, despite modern accretions, the remnants of its castles, walls, bridges, and sanctuaries transmit a stately calm, redolent of past nobility and African grandeur.

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The town is situated on a flat volcanic ridge at seven thousand feet above

175* 361

11:Levine Z-4,5 (1958-1961)1965 MP5 Amhara MP5

left Gondar for Shoa, where he became a favorite at the court of Emperor Menelik.

Alaqā Gabra Hānnā was not the only one to leave Gondar in the latter part of the nineteenth century. Conditions there had become increasingly miserable. In 1866 Tēwodros, angered by the opposition of the Gondarē clergy to his plans for unifying the country through a standing national army, turned his wrath against them into a fearful pillage of the churches of Gondar.* The next emperor, Takla Giyorgis, worked feverishly to rebuild Gondar during his few years in power (1869–72). It was to no avail. In 1887 a large army of dervishes invaded Ethiopia from the Sudan and sacked Gondar, destroying it more completely than had Tēwodros.

The priests and monks who survived carried on. Gondar remained an important center for instruction in *aquāquām* and *tergum*, though Gojjam became more important for the study of *qenē* and other schools in Bagemder and Tigre for the study of *zēmā*. The civil order, however, was thoroughly demoralized. Gondarēs left in large numbers for the countryside or made their way to Lāstā and more distant provinces.

At the time of the dervish invasion, the churchmen of Gondar appealed to Emperor Yohānnes for succor. The text of their message—the last utterance from the old capital—began as follows:

> O master! The heathen have come into thine inheritance; thy holy temple have they defiled; they have laid Gondar in heaps. The dead bodies of thy servants have they given to be meat unto the fowls of the heaven, the flesh of thy saints unto the beasts of the earth. Their blood have they shed like water round about Dambiyā; and there was none to bury them.[11]

Yohānnes responded at once. It was to revenge defenseless Gondar that he led the expedition against the dervishes which cost him his life, thereby leaving the way open for the accession of the House of Manz.

The Role of Manz

Manz is a rugged rural area of about 850 square miles located in the northeast horn of Shoa Province.[12] It lies on a broad plateau at a height of ten thousand feet above sea level. This plateau is crosscut by a number of rivers which flow westerly to become part of the great Blue Nile Basin. The valleys of the rivers are flanked by fairly abrupt cliffs, which make travel from one part of Manz to another slow going. These rivers form boundaries between the geographical divisions within Manz, which is divided into three major parts: Māmā Meder in the south, Lālo Meder in the center, and Gērā Meder in the north. The entire area of Manz is itself bounded by steep mountains.[13]

* Fortunately he preserved hundreds of manuscripts from Gondar's churches which eventually found their way to the British Museum after the Napier Expedition against Tēwodros in 1868.

11:Levine Z-4,5 (1958-1961)1965 MP5 Amhara MP5

I am the descendant of Nagāssi, and who put you, a Galla, on the throne of my fathers?"[31] He began his campaign by sending an expedition against the Wallo Galla, who were dependents of Rās Gugsa. But before he was able to persuade the reluctant Shoan nobility to venture forth against Gondar, Wassan Sagad's ambitions were cut short, in the fifth year of his reign, by the dagger of a slave.

The assassination of Wassan Sagad brought Shoa a moment of anarchy. In the absence of central authority, vicious passions were unleashed—"at Debra Libanos alone there fell no fewer than eight hundred victims to private animosity, of whose murder no account was ever taken."[32] The Galla burned hamlets over a wide area; they captured the heir apparent and prevented him from reaching the Shoan capital, then at Qundi. At this point Sāhla Selassie, younger son of the late *rās*, left the seclusion of his studies and presented himself to the Shoan nobility. His daring and quick wit won their consent. They named him Rās of Shoa at eighteen years, and he soon began to style himself as king (*negus*) of Shoa as well.

In the ensuing decades Sāhla Selassie completed the process of conquering and consolidating Shoa that his father had initiated. His rule was strong and beneficent, though tribes which did not pay tribute were shown no mercy. He led forays into Galla country three times a year, during which delinquent or independent settlements suffered sudden and total devastation.

A major crisis during the reign of Sāhla Selassie was the rebellion of one of his commanders, a man named Matako. Matako had risen to high position from that of minor retainer by dint of his fighting ability, but he antagonized the king by requesting that the king's daughter be married to his son. This was a double breach of etiquette, for the king's daughter would normally be given only to someone from a high-ranking family, and in any case the request should be tendered by some mediating elders, not in person. In the wake of the tension that ensued, Sāhla Selassie had Matako imprisoned. Matako escaped, however, and raised an army of Galla tribesmen to fight his campaign for revenge. The royal forces were in serious trouble. Sāhla Selassie sent a desperate message to the people of Manz: "My brothers, my relations, come and help me!"[33]

Such help could not be taken for granted. The men of Manz were then, as ever, fiercely independent, unwilling to subordinate themselves to distant authorities. At the time of Sāhla Selassie, in fact, Krapf observed that

> [His Majesty's] power and influence in that part of his dominions is very limited and loose. The Mansians openly declare, "We know little about Sahela Selassieh." Nobody would venture to say so in Efat.[34]

Still, the Shoan line had been infused with new Manzē blood by the marriage of Sāhla Selassie's father to Zanaba Warq, the grand-daughter of Golē,

11:Levine Z-4,5 (1958-1961)1965 MP5 Amhara MP5

[MANZ]

grandson of Gērā. Thanks to the intercession of his mother, Sāhla Selassie was able to reach his truculent kinsmen. In response to his appeal for help against the Galla forces, the Manzēs came in great numbers and saved the day. A vivid reconstruction of the final battle is provided by Harris:

> [Matako] and his gallant sons were everywhere in the thickest of the fight. His shout, rising high over the storm, animated the faint-hearted, and his presence roused to new life and exertion the successful partisan. Many of the Amhara bands were already reeling from the repeated shock of the wild riders of the Hawash [the Galla horsemen], when suddenly, in the very heat of the action, a large body of warriors, clothed in black mantles, and armed with long heavy spears, rushed down the hill on foot, and, prostrating themselves as they passed the royal unbrellas, descended fresh into the arena. The fierce inhabitants of Mans had sped to the rescue from their hereditary estates, and their savage ferocity and reckless bravery was well known throughout the land. The relations and the household retainers of the rebel attempted to breast the storm, but they were scattered like autumnal leaves before the angry blast; and the chief arrived to the succour only to behold the spot strewed with the bodies of his stoutest partisans. . . . A panic seized the pagans; and, dismayed and broken-hearted, they fled tumultously in every direction.[35]

Of the arts of peace, Sāhla Selassie was particularly absorbed in the development of manual crafts. He brought masons and carpenters from Gondar and took a personal interest in the work of his metalsmiths. He was eager to learn of European technical skills and showed much hospitality to missions from the British and French governments, with whom he concluded treaties of friendship and commerce.

In Gondar, Sāhla Selassie's province was known as "the most populous and most wisely governed" in the country.[36] His assumption of the title of *negus* had been urged by some of the Gondar nobility and clergy, for they looked to him for help in combatting the spread of Islamic influence by the Muslim Galla chief, Rās 'Ali. Sāhla Selassie needed little urging; his sights were set on the highest title of all—*negusa nagast* ("king of kings," or "emperor"). Yet he, like his father, was premature. Two more generations were to be needed before that triumph.

Abyssinia could not wait. The dissolution of imperial power and the inroads of Islam had proceeded too far. Unification of the country under a powerful monarch was the obvious need of the day. The process was begun by a rebel from Qwārā, who vanquished in turn the Rāses of Gojjam, Bagemder, and Tigre, and proclaimed himself emperor in 1855 as Tēwodros II.

Shoa could not long remain untouched by Tēwodros. The successor to Sāhla Selassie, his son Haile Malakot, tried to save Shoa's autonomy by leading an expedition to fight Tēwodros in Wallo, but found his camp impreg-

11:Levine Z-4,5 (1958-1961)1965 MP5 Amhara MP5

flushed with the reports of Menelik's conquests[47] and embellished by the wax and gold of Alaqā Gabra Hānnā, was a kind of traditional climax, a final expression of the integrity of traditional Amhara culture.

THE CONTEMPORARY SCENE

Gondar Today

A renascence of Gondar began during the Italian occupation, when it was made the capital of Amhara, one of the five large provinces into which the Italians divided Ethiopia. They equipped Gondar with modern buildings and roads, restored parts of the old castles, and made it the transportation center of northwestern Ethiopia.

After the liberation, Gondar retained some administrative importance by becoming the capital of Bagemder, one of the twelve provinces of postwar Ethiopia. A further impetus toward development of the town came in 1953 with the selection of Gondar as site for Ethiopia's first public health college. The existence of this college, with its enthusiastic staff of WHO and AID personnel, has stimulated the improvement of transportation and public utilities as well as local medical services. The population has increased to twenty thousand.[48] The progress shown by the city inspired one Ethiopian journalist to write, in the *Addis Zaman* of April 19, 1960: "By virtue of its annually increasing growth, sanitation, and modern appearance, one is emboldened to say that the city of Gondar takes second place only to Addis Ababa."

With the turn of Ethiopia's interest from the old church curriculum to a modern educational program, the traditional importance of Gondar has necessarily declined. It remains the place to go for the study of *aqūqūām* and for a "diploma" in textual studies, but the total number of students now pursuing these subjects is probably less than a hundred. Almost none of the young people of Gondar itself attend the higher church schools. Still in the vanguard of learning, Gondar's youth prefer the currently more advantageous government schools. The elementary schools of Gondar receive many more applicants than they can accommodate each year. Gondar's secondary school is, next to that of Harar, the oldest and largest in the provinces.

Nevertheless, the life of Gondar is still dominated by its clergy. Nine church schools in Gondar are supported by government funds. Unlike other cities in Ethiopia, Gondar is partly governed by a town council of clergymen. The city is divided into districts marked by the location of the churches, and the town council consists of the heads of these churches—some of whose positions are so important that they are assigned directly by the Emperor. This council is convened to handle disputes over land and other matters, and to communicate the mayor's proclamations to the people. An accusation signed for a plaintiff by a priest carries much weight in the local courts. The ecclesias-

11:Levine Z-4,5 (1958-1961)1965 MP5 Amhara MP5

643 right to a direct audience at any time. The Emperor is known to glow with
5771 pleasure when a subject with whom he is speaking reveals that he comes from Manz. The Manzēs, for their part, proudly refer to their area as *ya-negus agar* ("king's country"). They are perhaps the most devoted of all Ethiopians to the present Crown. However, many stories are told to show that this loyalty has not dissolved their intractable spirit. For example, when asked to select a representative for Ethiopia's first elected parliament in 1957, some of them were indignant: "We already have *our* representative in the capital, and if he isn't able to do the job himself, let him step down and hand it to somebody else."

871 Despite their expressed loyalty to Haile Selassie, the Manzēs stubbornly
658 oppose the program with which he is publicly most associated and whose portfolio he has retained, as Minister of Education, from 1943 to the present day. The adults of Manz object to having their children attend the government schools. In many cases where a child has elected to attend school on his own, his parents have cut off all support. The four schools in Manz thus have
[162] an enrolment far below capacity, totaling (as of 1960) less than four hundred in this area of perhaps fifty to sixty thousand families.[49] Those hardy youngsters who do attend school often do so in rags and with an empty stomach.

[857] One reason for this determined opposition to the government schools is the obvious economic one: children must stay at home to tend the herds. This is a problem all over rural Ethiopia, but still the schools in many other areas are overcrowded. Another reason is that, as we have seen, Manz was not interested in education in the old days. Few Manzēs learned to read in the church schools. When a boy showed unusual talent and interest in traditional studies he had to travel to Gondar, which often meant running away from Manz.

871 The crux of Manzē defiance of the new educational system, however, is
658 cultural fundamentalism. The Manzēs keep their children away from the
186 government schools because they fear that the students there are learning
829 something that threatens the old ways. In particular, they do not like their children to learn the language of the *faranj* ("European") or to be exposed to Ethiopians who have been taught by *faranj* and thereby infected by alien ideas. Tending the farm, keeping the fasts, defending land and self—that is the sum and substance of Manzē education, beyond which there is nothing a boy needs to learn.

829 Undoubtedly part of this dread of *faranj* learning is based on the Manzēs'
648 one experience with the white man: the Fascist occupation. As one of the
186 strongholds of patriotic resistance to the occupation, Manz and the Manzēs became the object of the invader's unyielding fury. Over miles and miles of Manz not a home or church was spared. The inhabitants were either killed, or fled to safer areas in Galla country, or joined the underground opposition—

11:Levine Z-4,5 (1958-1961)1965 MP5 Amhara MP5

in such numbers that "Manzē" virtually became a synonym for "underground patriot."

After the liberation, as after the routing of Aḥmad Grāñ's forces, the Manzē once again returned to redeem a ravished land. Slowly, the houses were rebuilt, the land was plowed once more. Churches which had been rebuilt after Grāñ's destruction only to be razed by the Italians were again put into place. Tough in his spiritual as in his physical life, the Manzē doggedly re-established the culture of his own. Now as before the occupation, a man of Manz sits on the throne, promising to let no foreigner take his country's land,* while the young braves celebrate the royal line in their festive boasting:

Ya-Manz ababā, ya-Manz ababā! Yābbabā genā!
The flower of Manz, the flower of Manz! It will bloom yet again!

The Legacy of Manz and Gondar

Thus far the significance of Manz and Gondar has been discussed from the point of view of an outsider. We have attempted to assess, on the basis of the best available evidence, the respective historical and cultural roles of these two noted Amhara regions. We turn now to a different though related question, namely, the significance of these two places in the minds and feelings of Ethiopians themselves.

Two kinds of reaction are conspicuous. To the Ethiopian Modernist, Manz and Gondar are seen primarily as outlying pockets of conservatism. Their commitments to the past move them to resist certain changes promoted by the national government, with Manz protesting modern education and Gondar defending itself against nationalist centralization. They are regarded as backward areas, representative of the many forces that are "holding Ethiopia back," and to a certain extent are disdained.

To their inhabitants, on the other hand, these places are objects of intense loyalty. For differences of identity among the Amhara are defined chiefly in terms of their *agar*, or "home country." The size of one's *agar* is relative; it depends on the context in which the symbol is used, and may be as small as a district or as large as a province. Whatever the referent, one's *agar* signifies more than a place of residence or provenience. It means "home," and all those whose families live there are regarded with special affection, while those out-

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* On certain festive occasions the following antiphonal chant is declaimed in praise of "Ṭaqel" (the affectionate, "horse" name of Haile Selassie):

[Leader:] *Min āla ṭaqel mīn āla?*
[Chorus:] *Agarē la-sow agarē la-sow alnṭem ala!*
[Leader:] What did Ṭaqel say, what did he say?
[Chorus:] "My country to outsiders, my country to outsiders, I will not give!" said he.

11:Levine Z-4,5 (1958-1961)1965 MP5 Amhara MP5

paid increased attention in recent years. A new phase of public health endeavor in this decade was marked by the imposition of a nationwide health tax in 1960.

Health has become a prime objective in Ethiopia's modernization program because of a growing realization that the wide prevalence of malaria, tuberculosis, typhus, intestinal parasites, syphilis, trachoma, leprosy, and other diseases continues to sap the vitality of the nation's productive forces and to visit misery on countless peasant families. The public health forces in Ethiopia (Ministry of Public Health, WHO mission, and AID Public Health Division) have long understood that Ethiopia's health needs cannot be met by piecemeal therapy. They have undertaken a program of preventive measures by preparing public health teams in the medical college at Gondar. The college trains health officers, community nurses, and sanitarians within a common framework, so that when they go into the field they will understand each other's tasks from the start. The first public health center employing such a team was opened in the late fifties; Ethiopia's Second Five-Year Plan envisions one such center for every fifty thousand people by 1967.

The objective of these public health workers is to transmit a number of instructions—concerning personal hygiene, environmental sanitation, early care for illness, and isolation of contagious diseases—which are at variance with customary beliefs and practices. Experience with comparable programs elsewhere suggests that the success of such health teams is by no means assured.[18] What are the forces working for and against the acceptance of these new instructions by the Amhara peasantry? Both negative and positive factors may be identified with respect to each of the three general categories previously referred to: the general outlook regarding change; attitudes toward the agents of change; and degree of compatibility between the new cultural items and the old.

The Amhara peasant's general resistance to change may be presumed operative here as elsewhere, particularly since health practices are often associated with religious beliefs and sentiments. Defense of indigenous therapies has in fact become a significant channel for the expression of traditionalist sentiment, a channel that has even been utilized on occasion in the Addis Ababa newspapers.[19] And a general posture of resistance to changes in the field of health is supported by the interests of traditional practitioners, *dabtarā* and *tanquāy*, who are in danger of losing clientele if modern-trained health workers come to win their allegiance.

Counter to this conservative drag, on the other hand, is the peasant's powerful desire for one basic change in his life circumstances, namely, the reduction of morbidity and mortality. Despite his idyllic conception of paradise and his frequent contention that life on earth is something of little value, the Amhara wants to avoid death. Even from the religious point of view he is

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be many years later, as a learned priest or *dabtarā* or as a successful warrior or official, and some sort of reconciliation might be effected with his family. In either case, from a sociological viewpoint, the rebellious youth is merely preparing himself to take over one of the more specialized functions on which the wider social order depends. His break with his parents does not signify a revolt against society, but, if anything, a closer attachment to society through more intimate alliance with its highest values, religion and warfare.

Thus there has always been some room for the attainment of a new social identity in Abyssinia. Although the rigidity of paternal authority often meant that it must be attained through rebellion, the adolescent could eat his cake of defiance and still have his cake of loyalty; and the social system was well served thereby.

ADOLESCENCE IN CHANGING ETHIOPIA

The foregoing description of adolescence still obtains for the vast majority of Amhara youth today. Side by side with this traditional pattern of "growing up on the farm," however, a quite different pattern of childhood and adolescence has been developing in Addis Ababa and in some of the provincial capitals. This new pattern follows the course of experience provided by participation in the government school system. It has radically interrupted the traditional rhythm of growing up and has posed more integrative problems than it has yet been able to solve.

The Welfare School

Public education in Ethiopia prior to the Italian invasion represented a small but significant trickle of activity alongside the mainstream of traditional institutions. Perhaps some six to seven hundred boys and girls received the beginnings of a modern education in the government schools of Addis Ababa by 1935.[9] Many others received some elementary education in government provincial schools and in schools operated by foreign religious missions, though the latter never played as significant a role in Ethiopia as they did in colonial Africa.

During the occupation, Ethiopians were prevented from acquiring anything higher than elementary education, but the Italians did construct a number of school buildings for their own nationals which facilitated the growth of the Ethiopian school system after 1941. By 1944 there were some 25,000 pupils enrolled in government schools, a figure which rose to 60,000 by 1950 and reached 234,000 in 1963.[10]

The base of the Ethiopian educational program has been an eight-year elementary curriculum, the first four years being taught in Amharic and the

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*883 66 ical wit and activism displayed by students from other countries has embarrassed their cautious dispositions.

There are three reasons for this relative lack of politicization of the Ethiopian students. One is that, having maintained her ancient independence [548] throughout the "scramble for Africa," Ethiopia entered the twentieth century as an independent nation; and five years of Italian rule were not sufficient to shake her spirit. Ethiopian students have thus not had to participate in the anti-imperialist movement, the great school for political activism in the colonial areas.

[571] [157] A second factor is the deeply rooted habit of total subordination to any legitimate authority. Because of this orientation there is a persisting disposition to relegate concern for all political questions to the highest authorities. [570] [829] Nearly two-thirds of the secondary students and a third of the college students maintain that one should always obey the order of a superior, arguing that "obedience is a virtue," "things would not go right otherwise," and "the Bible says so."

*883 66 641 The third reason for the almost apolitical posture of Ethiopian students has been the absence of opportunities for political expression in their country. African students from British colonies have in the past been surprised to find that their colonial situation admitted far more freedom of speech and press than Ethiopia. Teachers are expected to keep anything remotely connected with Ethiopian politics out of the classroom, and the editors are expected to keep them out of the newspapers. Nor have the students been permitted to form any kind of politically relevant associations. Even casual discussion of domestic political problems among friends has been curtailed because of the all-pervading fear of government informers.

*883 66 179 All this has not prevented Ethiopian students from being affected to a moderate degree by the libertarian and egalitarian ideals of the West. The teaching of European history in secondary school, evaluation of students' performance without respect to class or tribal affiliation, and the exercise of electing student officers in the colleges have acted to leaven the political imagination of the students. Many of them thus ventured a degree of political *883 66 criticism in their anonymous questionnaires. Forty-three per cent indicated 829 disapproval of the existing differences between "big men" and the common people. Thirty-nine per cent were critical of the degree of control exerted by the government, of which group two-thirds felt that governmental controls are too strict (e.g., not permitting free expression), and one-third felt they were not strict enough (e.g., with respect to corruption and provincial administration).

*883 668 669 The abortive coup d'état of December, 1960, jarred the Addis Ababa college students into an unprecedented state of political activity.[37] In response

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"subject to the approval of the Emperor" and gave him "the right to promulgate the decrees, edicts, and public regulations of the Church, except those concerning monastic life and other spiritual administrations."

The general position of the church had already been weakened by the events of the Italian occupation. Italian policy resulted in the destruction of many church buildings and the massacre of numerous monks, including those of the hallowed monastery of Dabra Libānos. Of the national leaders, the Egyptian *abuna* was out of the country from 1937 on; two of the bishops were put to death, including the much venerated martyr, Abuna Pēṭros;* and the remaining two compounded the demoralization by openly supporting the invaders. One of these went so far as to anathematize resistance fighters and forbade Ethiopian priests to give Christian burial to those who died as patriots. In some areas, moreover, it is said that the local clergy lost much prestige by welcoming the invader with open arms.

Haile Selassie thus had a much stronger hand in his dealings with the clergy when he returned from exile in 1941. The next year he issued a decree which sharply restricted the perquisites of the local clergy. Their landed properties were no longer tax free, but now carried the obligation to pay taxes at the normal rate into a central church treasury. The church was deprived of temporal jurisdiction over its ordained and lay members, including the authority to inflict fines, and was denied the right to corvée labor from peasants living on their lands. (In practice these latter restrictions of authority are frequently ignored in the provinces.)

The development of a nationwide system of government schools, finally, has broken the clergy's monopoly of educational facilities. Wherever government schools have invaded traditional Abyssinian regions, the clergy tend to be defensive and resentful. The specific issues have been the decreased prestige of certain traditional religious subjects, which are not taught in these schools, and the comparatively lower income of church teachers. Thus, a full-time teacher of reading attached to a monastery may receive Eth$15 a month from the central church treasury, whereas a government school teacher in the same area teaching the same subject may earn Eth$150 a month.

Despite all these blows, the clergy still retain much the same prestige as ever in the provinces. Their influence over public opinion is considerable, and has been a major factor in discouraging families in traditional Christian areas like Manz from sending their children to government schools.† Despite

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* A statue of Abuna Pēṭros has been raised in the center of Addis Ababa. His fate has been celebrated in the verse drama by Makonnen Endālkātchaw, *Yə-dam Dəmṣ*, translated into English as *The Voice of Blood* by Endālkātchaw Makonnen.

† When the Ethiopian government is ready to inaugurate a major program of provincial education, it should not prove difficult to overcome this opposition. A number of provincial priests, with whom the author has discussed this matter, have signified their willingness to serve as

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poses. They have been led to renounce extreme particularistic ambitions, thanks to marital connections, intimidation, the lure of new benefits, and a degree of nationalism, but to some extent they remain spokesmen for regional and para-dynastic interests.

Men who did not belong to the old nobility were recruited into the new nobility on the basis of two criteria, loyalty and ability, with loyalty clearly the more important of the two. Some men from very humble backgrounds have been thus raised to the highest governmental positions through their "loyalty" to the Emperor, manifested in great part by their readiness to inform on the words and deeds of others and their obsequious and flattering manner. These have normally not been given the traditional military titles but only the titles of their office. In contrast with the carry-overs from the old nobility, still known as *masäfent* and *makuännent*, these men have been called *bälaseltän* ("holders of power"). They have included a number of men who were active in the fight against the Italians, either through the Hagara Fiqer ("National Patriotic Association," a group organized in 1935 to promote Ethiopian unity and combat Italian propaganda) or as patriotic fighters in the resistance. The Emperor also promoted to high position some men who collaborated with the Italians, relying on their earlier record as an insurance against latter-day disloyalty, and using their antagonism against the patriots as a check against excessive ambitions of the latter.

On the other hand, the new nobility includes those who, whether from high family background or not, are so placed because of outstanding ability. This consideration is no longer primarily a question of military ability, but of competence in dealing with technical modern subjects and with foreign diplomats. This group may be equated with the older generation of European-educated Ethiopians. The categories of adjusted aristocrats, ambitious parvenus, and intellectual bureaucrats have thus constituted a latent subdivision among the new nobility; and tensions have from time to time been expressed along those lines.

Despite the elaboration of modern governmental structures under Haile Selassie, the dominant principle of the social order has been that of royal sovereignty. The entire staff of government officials has been the direct sociological descendant of the traditional court retinue. This was conspicuous in the titles given by Menelik to a number of the original ministers: *Afa Negus* for Minister of Justice; *Azäzh* for Minister of Palace; *Bajirond* for Treasurer; and *Ṭsahäfi Te'ezäz* for Minister of Pen. These and other court titles remain in use today. The primacy of the court over all other functions appears in periodic audiences at the palace, when all high government officials and other notables are expected to pay their respects no matter what business may be pending in their offices. The chief value embodied in the status group of the new nobility as a whole has been that of loyalty to the sovereign.

11:Levine Z-4,5 (1958-1961)1965 MP5 Amhara MP5

178 So long as they remain loyal, the Emperor has tended to let members of the
565 new nobility help themselves to the spoils of office. Some of them retain the
661 view that public office is a private possession, a reward from the emperor rather than an obligation to the nation or people, and that it is, therefore, appropriate to use governmental position primarily to help one's relatives, inflate one's ego, and multiply one's wealth.

178 For the new nobility, however, wealth is no longer measured primarily in
565 terms of land and cattle, but of money. If they own land, it is of interest chiefly
556 as a source of income, and they tend to prefer using it for cash crops like
[241] coffee and *çhat* (a narcotic plant sold in quantities to Arabs) than for the
[455] traditional grains and pulse or for experimental crops. They prefer to speculate in real estate rather than to increase the output of their farmlands. Indeed, because of the heightened prestige of money, many officials have been grateful—or would be grateful—for the opportunity to leave government service and become entrepreneurs. They feel very close to that small number of Ethiopians outside the government who have acquired much wealth through commercial enterprise, and who may also be included in the status group of the new nobility.

178 Commercial entrepreneurs came into prominence on the Ethiopian scene
565 in the 1920's, when monopolies in alcohol, matches, salt, and tobacco, as well
556 as trade in coffee and skins, enabled a small number of Ethiopian families,
472 Christian as well as Muslim, to accumulate wealth. Such people became
[175] prisoners of their wealth during the occupation, since they felt obliged to
[648] collaborate with the Italians in order to protect their privileges. Many more Ethiopians have profited from the modest economic activity in the country since the liberation, although most of Ethiopia's trade remains in the hands of Arabs, Greeks, and Armenians (at least nominally). Their social level approximates that of the higher government officials. They are expected to pay their respects at court along with the *makuānnent* and *bāla-selṭān*. They
[662] are often related to high government officials, and attempt to make use of their relatives in office to help them secure commercial advantages. Above all, they share the same style of life.

178 As an urban group, the new nobility enjoy a style of life notably different
565 from that of their predecessors who lived on mountainous estates and in army
369 tents. Even if assigned to provincial posts, members of the new nobility tend
177 to maintain homes in Addis Ababa. They have been quick to incorporate the
[556] more conventional urban Western forms of conspicuous consumption. Automobiles and chauffeurs, expensive European clothes, modern houses, Scotch whiskey, and Western-style banquets and dances have become the common ingredients of their subculture.

178 At the same time, traditional symbols of prestige are still in evidence. The
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11:Levine Z-4,5 (1958-1961)1965 MP5 Amhara MP5

perial favor—has also been their great dilemma. Those who have been conscientious in seeking to carry out their proper responsibilities have been torn by the need to do what they regard as improper in order not to incur the disfavor of the sovereign. Those with narrowly opportunistic motives have been rendered no less uneasy by the need to counter the offensives of their enemies at court.

This dilemma and the related "immorality" is a natural consequence of Ethiopia's attempt to begin modernization under a traditional despotic authority. The behavior of the new nobility that is so bitterly attacked by the intellectuals will continue to reproduce itself until the process of modernization renders it obsolete—until the specialized standards which control economic and governmental activities have been firmly institutionalized, with controls that operate independent of expressions of loyalty to the sovereign.

Standards of competence have been more firmly institutionalized in the case of a special group among the new men of power—members of the military profession. The officers corps should in fact be considered as an elite group in its own right, in view of its distinct status and functions as well as the size and political importance of Ethiopia's security forces. The regular armed forces number nearly thirty thousand; there are also an estimated twenty thousand men in the police force and an unknown number in the recently reactivated territorial armies. The number of men with the rank of major or equivalent and above is thus probably close to a thousand.

Ethiopian military officers are recipients of the special esteem their countrymen have always felt toward men of war. They have also acquired prestige from the military's efforts to defend and liberate the country during the Italian period and more recently for their backstopping of Ethiopia's claims on the Somali border. They have at the same time been objects of an undercurrent of civilian hostility, based on the feeling that they are "parasites" and doing nothing positive to enrich the country. Their style of life lends itself readily to provoking the latter sort of objection. While dissatisfaction over income on the part of non-commissioned military personnel has been a major source of tension in Ethiopia during the past decade, the perquisites of higher officers compare quite favorably with those of their civilian counterparts. They have been given substantial salaries—and in addition, free housing, free cars, and servants and retainers drawn from the rank and file. Keeping in mind his particular need to insure the loyalty of the military elite, the Emperor has furthermore presented personal gifts to individual officers directly from time to time.

As a result of intimate contact with European and American personnel who have trained them in Ethiopia, experience abroad as trainees or in United Nations military missions, and the emphasis on rationalization inherent in the modern military profession, members of the military elite tend to be

11:Levine Z-4,5 (1958-1961)1965 MP5 Amhara MP5

701 more eager and impatient to modernize Ethiopia than do members of the
• 648 new nobility. This contrast was already apparent at the time of the Italian invasion, when Ethiopian officers were condemning the archaic practices of civilian officials who, they charged, were holding back the defense efforts. Yet the image of a progressive, solidary military elite in Ethiopia is justified no more than the image of a reactionary, solidary ministerial elite; nor should the military leaders be seen as standing in fundamental opposition to their civilian counterparts. There is much friendly intercourse between the two groups. Army officers are often related to civilian officials, by blood or by marriage. Military personnel have in a number of cases been assigned to civilian posts in the government. While the military carry on much of their social life among themselves, they also enjoy a good deal of interaction with civilians of high status at parties, dances, weddings, and funerals.

701 Like the new nobility, moreover, the military officers do not form a cohesive group with common interests and ambitions. The one group which did develop a high degree of solidarity, esprit, and common political goals—the Officers Corps of the Imperial Bodyguard—was dissolved in the wake of its defeat in the 1960 rebellion. The military men have been checked and balanced by much the same techniques as have the new nobility. As a whole, they are held together by little more than the institutionalized structure of the security forces. As such, they are in any event bound to play an important part in determining the character of the future government of Ethiopia as they are crucial now in upholding the present regime.

THE BIRTH OF AN INTELLIGENTSIA

571 The formation of a modern intellectual class in Ethiopia is still in its earliest
891 stages. Given the small number who have completed elementary school (a
162 number still under one per cent of the national population) all Ethiopians who have graduated from secondary school may for the time being be considered members of a secular educated elite, those with college and graduate degrees enjoying correspondingly higher status within this elite. The total number in this group reached an estimated six thousand in 1962, about one-fourth of whom held college degrees.

571 Equally indicative of the rudimentary condition of the Ethiopian intelli-
gentsia is the poverty of its institutional facilities and of its means of communication, both internally and with the international intellectual commu-
571 nity. As of 1961, institutions with primarily intellectual purposes were lim-
893 ited to the small college of arts and sciences, four vocational colleges, two
894 small research centers (the Pasteur Institute and the Section d'Archéologie, both financed by France and staffed mostly by non-Ethiopians), the Haile

11:Levine Z-4,5 (1958-1961)1965 MP5 Amhara MP5

Selassie I theater, and the secondary level art school.* Library facilities included the National Library, with some fifty thousand volumes; the University College Library, with about forty-five; and the reading rooms of the United States Information Service, the British Center, and the Soviet Information Service. The national library also contains a historical museum, and there is a handsome and well appointed archeological museum nearby, neither of which has so far been operated with a view to encouraging public attendance.

Except for occasional lectures sponsored by the national library and the University College extension program, none of the above institutions serves as a center for intellectual communication among adult Ethiopians. It was hoped by some that with the inauguration of the Haile Selassie I University, in December, 1961, a major new center of intellectual life would be created; but the government found it difficult to push ahead with its announced concept of an integrated institution which would operate autonomously and at a high standard.

Outside these institutions, moreover, there have been few channels of communication through which Ethiopian intellectuals can develop their minds and stimulate their imaginations. There are no periodicals to serve as a medium for such communication. One possibility, the *Ethiopian Observer*, is not quite an exception. Limited resources have kept it from operating at as high a level as available talent might permit, and its basically apologetic orientation renders implausible its claims to be "A Journal of Independent Opinion." The daily newspapers which feature contributed articles—the *Ethiopian Herald*, the *Addis Zaman*, and the Amharic sections of the *Voice of Ethiopia*—have tended to exclude pieces that have anything to do with highly controversial matters. Nor are there many social occasions for the serious discussion of intellectual matters. Professional associations, clubs devoted to intellectual matters, and even informal discussion groups exist not at all or else in a very haphazard form.

Contact with the intellectual world outside Ethiopia is almost as meager. Foreign-educated Ethiopians tend to become intellectually demoralized on returning home. The loss of a taste for reading has frequently been one of the first casualties experienced by Western-educated Ethiopians on return from abroad. Only a few hardy souls attempt to maintain some sort of link with the outside world, through subscribing to such magazines as the *New Statesman*, *Paris Soir*, or *New Republic*. For most of them, coming home means a cessation of the most elementary intellectual functions, other

* In 1963 an Institute of Ethiopian Studies was established at Haile Selassie I University, including a substantial Ethiopiana library and museum.

11:Levine Z-4,5 (1958-1961)1965 MP5 Amhara MP5

quite a few of these men went to school in France and Switzerland, while others studied in Egypt, England, the United States, and Italy. In general, this first group of returnees was enthusiastic and outspoken in their desire to modernize the country. They were emboldened by the feeling that Haile Selassie was their champion, though some of them, who took plans for a Young Ethiopia movement with them into exile during the occupation, felt a need for more radical reforms than the Emperor was willing to admit.

The pre-occupation intellectuals have no significant voice as such in Ethiopia today. Many of them were massacred by the Italians following the attempt on Graziani's life in 1937. Those who survived have been scattered, some being so thoroughly absorbed in the new nobility as to lose their identity as intellectuals, others tending to lead somewhat isolated and demoralized lives. Only the handful of older military officers, who were trained at the St. Cyr Academy in France, retain any semblance of common identity based on prewar study abroad.

In speaking of the returnees, then, we speak essentially of a group whose education abroad dates to the late forties and after. The typical postliberation returnee has studied from three to five years abroad in an English-speaking institution, under the sponsorship of the Ethiopian government; though there are many exceptions to this type.

As of June, 1959, the main countries in which some five hundred Ethiopians had studied since the mid-forties were: United States and Canada, 38 per cent; United Kingdom, 20 per cent; Lebanon (American University of Beirut), 17 per cent; Western Germany, 10 per cent; and India, 4 per cent. This pattern began to change somewhat at the end of the fifties as, in addition to these countries, Ethiopians in increasingly large numbers began to attend schools in Egypt, Italy, France, Israel, and Sweden. The subjects pursued by these students covered the whole academic spectrum—from dairying and forestry to languages and theology. Most of them, however, concentrated in one of four fields: social sciences, 30 per cent; engineering, 23 per cent; education, 12 per cent; and medical sciences, 12 per cent. Notably underrepresented in their studies were the fields of business and the natural sciences.

The length of time spent abroad varied considerably. Of the three hundred students who had returned by 1958 for whom complete information is available, 15 per cent studied abroad for only one year and 18 per cent for two years; 36 per cent were abroad from three to five years, 25 per cent from six to eight years, and 6 per cent for nine or more years. The education of about half of these students was paid for by the Ethiopian government itself. Others went on scholarships given by the United States government through AID (20 per cent); by other foreign governments, chiefly West Germany and

11:Levine Z-4,5 (1958-1961)1965 MP5 Amhara MP5

India (10 per cent); and by international organizations, chiefly WHO and ICAO (8 per cent). The others were financed privately, either by their families (8 per cent), or, in a few cases (3 per cent), by religious groups or business firms.

Given this variety of educational background, it is not surprising that the experience of study abroad has had a variable effect on the returnees. Their images of modernity are differently colored according to the country where they have received their higher education. Their archetypes for the modern component of language vary according to the language in which they have received their technical training.

Despite such variety—which may ultimately serve to enrich their cultural life more than to fragment it—several effects of the experience abroad appear common to nearly all the returnees. These include a radical broadening of perspective; the taste for a high standard of living; greater appreciation of political freedom; a heightened sense of Ethiopian identity; and an increase in nationalistic sentiment.

Because Ethiopian students are highly motivated to learn what goes on about them in foreign countries, their travel abroad has tended to broaden their outlooks rather than to confirm their prejudices. This expansion of perspective alters their attitude toward Ethiopia in two different ways. On the one hand, by enabling them to evaluate aspects of Ethiopian life they had previously taken for granted, it has made them more aggressively critical about conditions at home. On the other hand, it has given them a greater sense of pride about Ethiopia. They have noticed that, however advanced their host country, it had certain shortcomings of its own, a sort of observation which has tended to ease the sting of cultural inferiority inevitably felt during the stay in a more modernized society.

> Before going to the United States, I pictured it as the most perfect country on earth. We students in Ethiopia believed that everything good and beautiful comes from America. After studying there, I was disappointed in many ways. For example, I found the Americans to be hypocritical—they go to church, and don't care about religion; they talk about tolerance, and are still quite prejudiced. This was a great lesson for me. I can never be so romantic about a foreign country again, and can appreciate Ethiopia's strengths as well as its weaknesses better now.

Short travel tours sometimes had a similar effect:

> I spent several weeks in Yugoslavia. . . . And I must say—despite how backward we are here, we live much more happily than the Yugoslavs. The people themselves are wonderful—warm and generous; but their lives are miserable. That experience was really quite a surprise for me.

No matter what its shortcomings, the host country inevitably accustomed Ethiopians abroad to a higher standard of living than they had known at

12:Young E-4,5 (1966) 1971 MP5 Amhara MP5
Begemder

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632 centered in a town and extending outward to include those areas from which peasants come to buy and sell.
[132] The size of the town's sphere contracts and expands sea-
[484] sonally, reaching its nadir furing the rainy season, when overland travel becomes difficult owning to deep mud and raging torrents. Then, travelling is infrequent and confined to the market town closest to a peasant's home parish. Although market trips are more frequent during the remainder of the year, most terminate at the closest market. These relatively short trips are favored when grain is brought to the mills located on the periphery
[796] of most market sites. The spheres of the larger towns (Gondar, Debre Tabor, Dabat) reach maximum size on the market days which preceed the great celebrations of the Coptic Church---Meskal (which celebrates the discovery of the True Cross, and follows the end of the rains), Michaelmas (November), Timkat (feast of the Epiphany, and preceeding the Lenten fast), and Easter. Map 3 indicates the extreme limits for market spheres of the towns of the Begemder highlands.

[491] The highland market towns are strung along the province's only all-weather motor road.[14] Each offers a

[648] [14]This road, built during the Italian occupation (1936-1941), runs north to Asmara (capital of Eritrea) and (since the 1960's) south to Addis Ababa (the national capital). A dry season road links the highland towns to Metemma on the Sudan border.

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621 into sixty-five named wards (sebekas). The social and demographic character of wards varies considerably, and it is useful to describe them in terms of two contrasting types. At one extreme, the ward resembles a kind
[241] of urban parish. It contains an eponymous Church; and
[423] a majority of residents are ristenas, members of land-owning ambilineages who support themselves by farming and renting homesteads on their lands. But even these wards contrast with rural parishes on several counts.
*[192] The ward is generally compact in size, and internally
[463] undivided beyond the homestead (bet). Within it live out-landers who work outside the ward in exclusively non-agricultural occupations. Further, while the parish is administered in detail by residents, the ward relies upon non-resident agents of the municipality for its administration.

At the other extreme, are the town's "non-corporate"
• [648] wards. During the Italian occupation, several of
[175] Gondar's parish-like wards were sequestered by the invaders as building sites. After liberation, the Imperial government divided each of these wards into tracts, which were deliniated according to the buildings upon them. Tracts were then given as grants (yaribena mariet, "hero's land") to supporters of the government-in-exile, who were often non-residents of Gondar. In time, the pre-war boundaries of such wards were no longer regarded